

A HISTORY OF COSSACK

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A HISTORY OF COSSACK

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1863 1887
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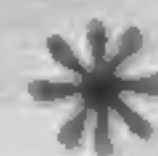
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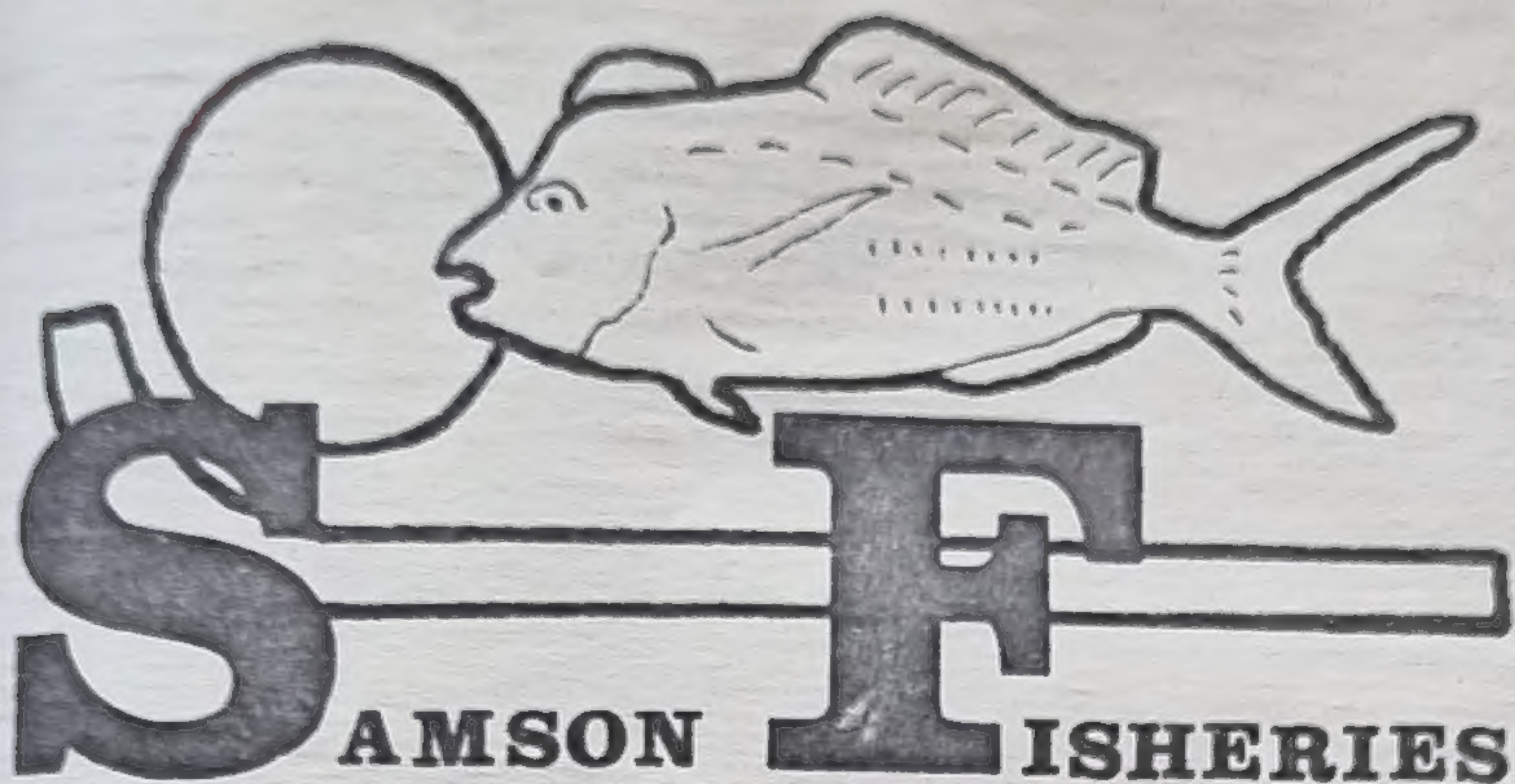
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A HISTORY OF COSSACK

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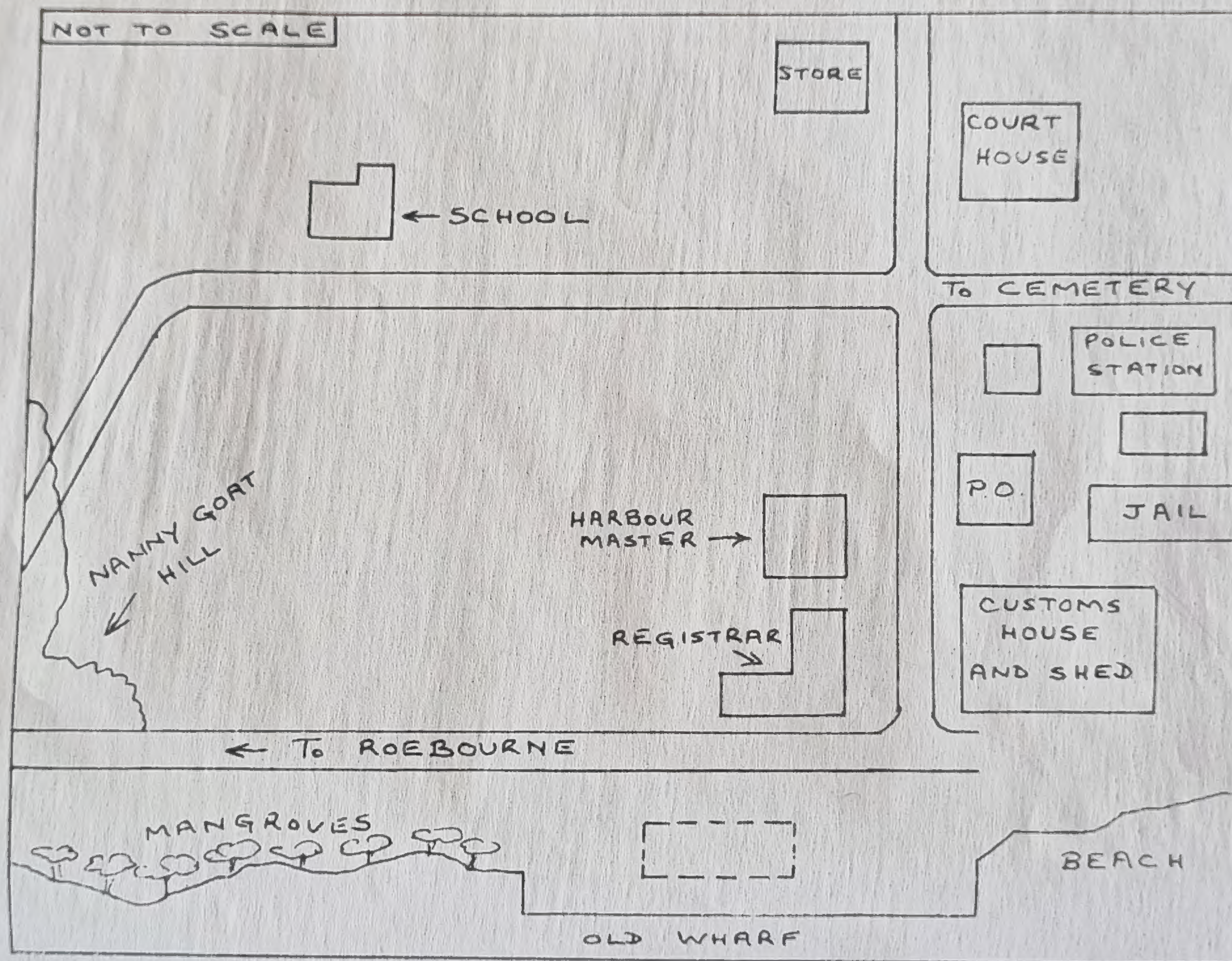
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COSSACK TODAY



Dear Reader,

"SHORT HISTORY OF COSSACK"

We sincerely hope you will enjoy reading this book about the events of the past and the people who developed this area; which brings us to the point of this short note:-

The Roebourne District Youth Club is in the process of forming a Local Historical Museum and we ask you to loan, or donate to the Museum, any item of historical value or interest you may have in your possession, or even know about. All items will be exhibited with the donor's name attached.

ROEBOURNE DISTRICT YOUTH CLUB.

COSSACK

1863

- 1887

Cossack is situated on the West bank of Butcher's Inlet. Butcher's Inlet is where the Harding River flows into the ocean, two miles from the entrance is Jarman Island.

Captain Jarman was Captain of the "Tien Tsin" and Butcher was the Chief Officer - the two places were named after the respective officers.

There is a difference of opinion about where Mr. W. Padbury landed in 1863 but according to old reports he landed where Cossack is today.

The "Mystery", a small coastal vessel left Fremantle on April 14th, 1863, with Messrs. C. Hunt and Turner, under Capt. Hedland, and proceeded up the coast, their instructions were to take sounding and look for a suitable place for the "Tien Tsin" to land the stock, anywhere between Cape Lambert and the De Grey River.

Hunt and Turner examined the mouth of the De Grey, found it unsuitable, and communicated the fact to Padbury who met them in Port Wallcott. A harbour was selected in Butcher's Inlet and named Tien Tsin.

As the pasture around the anchorage was not attractive and had no water, Messrs Padbury, Samson, Turner, Nairn and Captain Jarman proceeded up the Harding River in a small boat. They found water and suitable

feed at what was known as the "Walnuts". On their return to the ship the stock and goods were unloaded and taken up to the Walnut water. Nairn was left in charge, Padbury went back in "Tien Tsin" to Fremantle.

Cossack acquired its name from the H.M.S. "Cossack" which visited Tien Tsin Harbour in 1871 with the Governor Sir Frederick Weld on board.

Soon after the settlement of Roebourne and Cossack commenced to take shape it was noticed that the natives wore necklaces of mother of pearl.

Beach combing was carried out for the pearl shell by many of the settlers during the slack season on the pastoral properties, also by some settlers in Roebourne and Cossack. As a consequence a small industry began at Port Wallcott and Nichol Bay. Natives were used to dive for shell from small boats. The natives could reach the depth of three to five fathoms.

In 1868, the pearl shell rush was on. In 1874 it was worth £80,000. After this, a depression set in and it took a few years to recover.

The first pearling boat was built by Mr. C. Harper for his own use in Cossack.

The transport between Roebourne and Cossack was primitive. Those who had vehicles were lucky and those who did not have one depended on their friends for transport and who

were always willing to help. Goods were carted in horse drawn vehicles, also bullock drays.

In 1872 Cossack was declared a Town and Port of Roebourne.

Captain Morris was the first Engineer of the W.A. Government in the North, and he supervised the building of the tram line from Roebourne to Cossack which was completed by Mr. Owen as Capt. Morris died and Mr. Owen took his place. This line was completed about 1888 or 1889.

The old two-storey Post Office was the first building of stone erected in Cossack; it was built of a form of sandstone. The bottom portion was used as a bond store and the upper part a Post Office.

The courthouse and customs house were built about 1885 or 1886 for they were completed when Mr. Owen arrived in 1887.

The houses in Cossack, apart from the Government buildings, were built of wood with galvanised iron roofs. They were anchored down with steel cables over the roof and buried on each side in deep cement blocks. This was done to save them from the blows.

COSSACK

1890 - 1900

REMINISCENCES OF MR. W.A. THOMPSON

Having been born at Cossack I with the rest of my brothers and sisters left for South in the year 1900. I was then approaching 16 years of age and still retain a clear knowledge or recollection of events up to that time, both as regards any personal recollection for the year 1890 and some events back in 1889. I have also a clear recollection of certain happenings relating to a much earlier period as told to his children from time to time by my Father.

My Father's name was Andrew Stonehouse Thompson and so far as I can ascertain he arrived at Cossack between the years 1870 and 1876 in a lugger which (he was a shipwright by trade) he built at Fremantle with the intention of entering into pearling operations. However, his services were so much in demand by the pearling fleet and house building already operating that he sold his boat and remained at Cossack.

My Mother, with her two sisters, one brother and her Father arrived by one of the large four masted "wool ships" coming here to pick up a cargo of wool. The girls were engaged as Governess's on certain stations (my Mother whose maiden name was Cave was on Croydon station). She married my Father about a year or two after her arrival and one of her sisters married a well-known station owner and official, Mr. Horace (better

known as Horrie) Sholl who arrived at Cossack a little later.

I am now camping at Cossack and hope to complete a three months visit before returning South, and am prompted to write this narrative, to correct exaggerated and inaccurate information of events which appear to have been passed on to some of our historians who have sought knowledge of the oldest import- and Port north of Fremantle.

It appears that Cossack as a Port was well established by the year 1860 or earlier. I have no authentic information but have heard it stated that Cossack started 1850/1860. Stations as we knew them, had been opened up in various directions, and distances from Roebourne. Mrs. Withnell was well known as the first white woman to arrive at Cossack and go inland.

Cattle and sheep had been brought by water and by land.

Woolships (large four masted vessels) were calling with overseas cargo and to pick up the woolclip. Some of these vessels would anchor outside the creek beyond Jarman Island and the cargo would be unloaded and loaded per lighter (usually flat bottomed sailers), others would come into the creek and proceed to the "Deep hole" Jetty as it was known on the opposite side of the creek to the township where they could remain afloat at any tide. Sometimes two vessels would lie side by side at the Jetty which was still in order when our family left in 1900.

Some writers have stated that the wool was carted to Cossack per camel and horse team; but this is contrary to fact. Camels were never used for this work and the only lot to pass through Cossack to the best of my knowledge was a shipment in the early or mid 1890's which were landed per lighters from a steamer lying outside Jarman Island; and the whole shipment went north to the Kimberleys country, greatly to the relief of Cossack horse owners as our horses disliked the scent of the camels and stampeded to the hills across the marsh.

Prior to the arrival of two steam lighters (the "Beagle" and the "Croydon") in the mid 1890's no power was used at Cossack. Unloading cargo from the lighters was carried out by one horse power "Boxer". This well trained chestnut animal was owned by the Nor-West Mercantile Co. formerly W.D. Moore & Co. of Fremantle). The operation was simple but efficient. Boxer would be hitched to the end of a hauling rope at a position near the edge of the wharf, and on a signal from the ship's hold, would make a fast passage outwards from the lighter and, as the sling swung into position over the parapet, the driver on a position on a signal would release the half hitch from the horses swingle bar, and allow the load to land and be dealt with by the lumpers.

Wool for shipment arrived at Cossack in large waggons drawn by big teams of horses or bullocks, hitched or yoked in pairs; but as I state never by camel. Some of the wool bales were reduced in size by the Nor-West Mercantile Co who operated an effective hand press, but the bulk was shipped away in large bales similar to those used to the

present day.

Quite a few shipments of stud bulls and horses were landed at Cossack from the South in the 90's, and were held for a time in the large and strongly fenced paddock taking up the whole of the ground between the new water police quarters and gaol and running down toward the water front and alongside the Union Bank building (I believe the yard was provided by station owner Sam McKay).

Cossack for many years was a very busy port handling all supplies for Marble Bar, Whim Creek, Port Hedland, Condon, Balla Balla, Maud's Landing and several others.

The cargo for these places was transhipped at Cossack into ketches, which we knew as a vessel larger than a lugger, but smaller than a schooner, and having one mast taller than the other.

At least two vessels competed for the transhipment trade; one skippered by Syd. Hadley, and the other Jack Tagg.

Both these men were colorful figures in the life at Cossack, particularly Syd Hadley. During the latter half of the 1890's this skipper after landing his cargo at its destination disappeared for several months and was written off as lost at sea. He was subsequently found amongst a tribe of aborigines, who picked him up in a bad condition and cared for him.

After being found and brought back to Cossack he stayed at our boarding house. (which had been opened to cope with the gold rush which if I remember rightly took place after discovery of gold at Mallina).

Syd had turned religious and declared he would not have his hair cut (he had grown flowing locks reaching below his shoulders) until he had made atonement for his past life. He kept this vow and subsequently left Cossack to take up Mission work on one of our Northern Islands (Sunday Island). We heard of him from time to time, and that he died a number of years later, true to his work.

Possibly the second most important reason for the existence of Cossack was the pearling industry which I understand came into operation between the years 1855 and 1865. By the year 1895 it had waned considerably; but was still being carried on by a diminishing number of luggers and a few schooners.

I have been astonished to learn from visitors that they have been informed that the Japanese were the main owners pearling here in the old days. On the contrary, the Japs had least of any interest in the industry. Of the Asiatics at either Cossack or Roebourne the Japs were a minority, except for Japanese women; and in fact I have come to the conclusion that a certain "Well to do" Japanese made his wealth by the exploitation of these women. Very few Japs were employed in operating the pearling fleet from Cossack. The majority of those working the luggers were Malays and Manila men, in the employ of European owners. They

would control and supply from a schooner always known as the "Mother Ship".

The mother ships would control possibly five to ten luggers each.

The luggers would start dribbling in towards end of September and the last would probably have arrived by end of November and the mother ships following.

The luggers needing repairs to under water copper sheathings, deck caulking, or any other work, would lay up at the Western end of the town ship on a beautiful wide sandy beach, which was a feature of Cossack's fore-shore up to the year 1900; but seems to have deteriorated since then, by the extensive collection of mud and Mangrove growth at both western and eastern ends of the old port.

The remainder of the luggers would anchor securely in the protected waters, in lee of the mangrove island, lying one third the length of Cossack creek at the western end. At low water many old rusted anchors and chains were still visible as evidence of breakaways during a "willy willy" or, as they are now known a "cyclone". Then this occurred the lugger usually followed the course of one of the two main creeks, which flowed under the two bridges on the road to Roebourne and finished high and dry on the marsh beyond; from which they were usually slid back to the creek and worked back to Cossack. (Note: The structures, although built of very strong 12 x 12

bearers which had apparently been washed across the marsh-land straddling the old tram track near the foot of 'Table Top' Hill and it was still in good condition. The bridges have now been dispersed with by many tons of stone).

The 'layup' of the fleet each year caused a big increase in the population of Chinatown from a normal 220 to approximately 350. This increase usually led to sundry brawls, stabbings, or as on one occasion shooting. In practically every case the Malays were usually the principal participants and at times, special police were sworn in.

To understand the position clearly it might be advisable to give a description of Chinatown (it was never referred to as 'Jap Town').

It was made up of two Chinese stores, Chinese bakery, one Japanese store (Muramat's), one Turkish bath house, a few Jap males, a lot of Jap women, a goodly number of Chinese and a big majority of Malays and lesser number of Manila men; in addition to these Asiatics, there were two Chinese stores and one bakery in Cossack township itself, also a Cingalese tailor; but no other Asiatics.

Trouble at Chinatown often broke out whilst the Chinese celebrated their annual festive occasion, the main feature of which was a huge moving "dragon". On one such occasion our leading Cossack Chinese storekeeper had his throat cut at Roebourne Chinatown (the Doctor subsequently saved his life however), another

was stabbed at Cossack; another incident was the occasion (at the time of the earlier mentioned gold rush) when our Japanese cook, employed at the Boarding House my parents were running, was shot dead as he sat in his room at Chinatown by Malays who took it into their heads to shoot through the weather board walls of every Japanese occupied house. The final incident that stands out in my memory, was an occasion about 18 months before leaving Cossack. A number of young chaps and lads (including yours truly) took it into our heads to form a band and Christmas Eve played about the town and after the elders had imbibed a few drinks and been presented with several bottle of beer which my elder brother was given to carry for safety, we proceeded to "play" at Chinatown. The bag was placed in a narrow laneway alongside Muramat's store and we played in front of a house occupied by a number of Malays.

After an interval, it was found that our bag of beer had disappeared; two of our older members accused the Malays of stealing. An argument ensued, the Malays drew revolvers and came at us. Fortunately we had as a member of our party a young chap named Albert Ramsamy and he could speak the Malay language fluently. He addressed them forcibly in their own tongue and persuaded them to sheath their weapons. (By the way - the bag of beer was never found).

Writing of Albert Ramsey reminds me that the family of three carried on a part in the pearling industry. They were black skinned but certainly not American or African negro. I have since concluded they were possibly of Jamaican origin. Sam, whom I understood to be the father of John and Albert, used a lugger a little larger than the general size and was operating right up to the time of our departure. John carried on in a couple of open boats manned by aboriginal skin divers and in season, would return with a load of gulls' eggs which would be sold at Cossack in kerosene tins and were availed of as a very acceptable addition to the menu. (Very few hen eggs were available). Gulls' eggs were about three quarter size of a full size hen egg and the shell was spotted with irregular black markings.

Very important (and possibly the most unique of its kind in the State) was our horse tram service which was carried on between Cossack and Roebourne over a 12 mile route. I do not recall when the service was introduced, but I can remember riding the train in the year 1889.

The carriages were quite comfortable with seats running down the centre lengthwise and the passengers sat both sides, back to back. Strong red and white striped curtains ran from roof to floor along the outer edge of the floorboards and the driver sat in a semi-enclosed seat outside the front of the tram - with good brakes to control speed and good control of the horse which was usually kept at a steady trot. The service was two trams per day from both Roebourne and Cossack and a goods truck service in between.

the system was for a tram to leave Roebourne at the same time as that leaving Cossack, the trams would meet at a double line section, six miles from each place and would change horses and drivers.

The car barn and stables were situated just beyond the new courthouse (still standing) and the original starting station was at the corner near the Jetty, until the route was changed on the building of the new custom house and bond store about the middle of the 1890/1900 period.

The route up to this time was North and proceeded about half a mile, passing the new courthouse site before it was built, and then turned West across the marsh for about four miles, where it entered the spinifex country passing close to Table Top Hill.

After building the new custom and bond store, courthouse, water police quarters and gaol, a new tram station was built on raised land opposite the White Horse Hotel; between the main road and the sea and the route proceeded west (protected by a stone wall from the rising tides) for about one quarter mile then turned North, crossing our main front street onward, over a concrete culvert (this culvert is still intact) and on past the new school (built 1896/7) until it joined the old route as it entered the four mile of marsh previously mentioned. I might also mention that the telegraph line also followed the same route.

After the 1894 willy willy, the tram played an important part in the lives of Cossack school children.

The original school (it was also Church, concert and dance hall), was situated in the hollow between the long hill at the back of the town and the present courthouse.

The willy willy completely demolished the hall and so far as I know it was never rebuilt.

All school children were placed on the tram in the morning and brought back in the late afternoon. We attended the old Roebourne school which was a wooden hall at the foot of Mt. Welcome on the main street and so far as I can recall, Miss Rouse was our teacher for the greater part of the time.

Between school out and tram starting time, we filled in by playing on the rocks around the deep pools of the Harding River until a boy and girl from a Roebourne family were drowned and authorities got a move on building the new stone school, which is still standing, minus the roof on the back street, soon after passing Nanny Goat Hill at the entrance to Cossack.

I have been told on more than one occasion or asked "Was it a fact that Cossack was built by the convicts?" To this I can give a very positive denial. Convicts as we know them were never brought to Cossack for any work whatsoever. The nearest approach to convict labour was that work which was done by our native

prisoners, who were always chained in "pairs" by about 12 feet of light mesh chain, one end fitted by leather bound collar around his neck and linked at the end of the chain to his workmates chain, thus giving each at least 20 feet working space. For clothing the prisoners wore only a grey blanket skirt from waist to knee. I well recall a large gang in the mid or later 90's being located in a house at the rear of our place; but nearer Nanny Goat Hill on the back road. These prisoners were in the locality for a long while and were occupied forming the foundation and surfacing the main front street, which ran past our front door. On one occasion a pair managed to slip away from the gang and made off across the marsh. The warder could not pursue and as mounted police were not stationed at Cossack, word had to be sent to Roebourne. By the time that our police got on the escapees' tracks it was found that they had managed without much loss of time to split a link and discard the chains. The apparent ease and skill which they demonstrated in this, and other escapes rather discards the authenticity of a supposed happening during the 1898 willy willy, when some damage was done to the Roebourne gaol. The tale as told to me recently was that all the prisoners escaped over the wall and that some returned to the police station with an injured Constable and then cleared off again". The tale (or leg pull) then is that all were found strewn along the track after the storm "dead", as they had not been able to discard their chains. I leave my readers to judge the possibility of this happening, and it seems strange that I, myself at the age of 14 when this was supposed to have happened, have no recollection of such a sensational event.

Whilst writing of natives, it might be appropriate to give an outline of their position in the life of Cossack during the period under review, but before doing so I will repeat a couple of the stories as told to us by our parents in reference to the local tribe and its relations with the early history of Cossack.

I was given to understand the tribe claiming Cossack as part of its stamping ground was a small one and quickly became friendly with the whites. I have forgotten the native name of their King, but he was best known to the whites as King "Mulligan".

On an early occasion when one of the first shiploads of cattle anchored in Cossack creek, the King and some of his followers were invited aboard to see the cattle. The visitors took one look into the hold at the tossing horns and, led by King Mulligan and a yell of "Joona" (their name for the devil), they dived overboard and swam ashore.

Another story having a more historical bearing was that on a memorable occasion, King Mulligan kept the whites informed of a pending attack by a hostile tribe from the North, which was to take the form of a surprise on Cossack across what all know now as "Popes Nose" creek at the South western entrance to what is now the port of "Point Samson". In due course, the few women of Cossack were left in the "Weld" hotel billiard room under the care of King Mulligan and his tribe, whilst the whites went out to meet the hostile tribe as they attempted to cross the creek and gave them such a reception that no further attempt was ever made again to attack.

I have earlier mentioned conditions under which the native prisoners were held for various offences; but there was another custom of recruiting labour which some who read, may look at with condemning eye, or caustic tongue. But in spite of such, the method seemed to work to the satisfaction of both parties. I would make it clear that I am referring only to the period 1890/1900 of which I have personal memory. Twice during this period I have memories of a schooner arriving at the beach opposite our home, with a load of aboriginal youths of ages from 18, to maybe 25. These recruits for labour had been picked up along the coast and had come apparently willingly. They were unloaded on to the beach and camped there until signed on to various employers, I would again emphasise that they were apparently quite happy and often engaged in various games with myself and other youths, on the beach; which at that time was a fine wide sandy beach reaching from "Nanny Goat" Hill almost to Cossack Jetty. Some of these recruits were absorbed into labour at Cossack, but the majority went to Roebourne and possibly to station employment - of their destination I have no knowledge. I understood the employment conditions to be two years service and then return to their original recruiting point if they desired. They never desired lodgings, but preferred to sleep in "Mia Mias". Board and wages were 2/- per week, plus tobacco, this latter was the well known "Conqueror" twist, which the blacks usually chewed, but seldom smoked.

The 2/- was usually spend entirely on "sugar beer" (brewed hop beer of those days). As an example of the contented and happy lives of these recruits, I quote the occasion on which our "boy" on a certain Sunday afternoon, led myself and elder brother with another lad, secretly to a position in the sandhills beyond Martin's slaughter house, where we were able to witness a tribal fight, unknown to the two participants. The fight was between two parties, some eight or ten natives in each, with apparently two adjudicators in addition. The parties faced each other at spear throwing distance and on a given signal alternatively aimed their weapons at the opposing party, whose defence apparently was to deflect the spear from their bodies, with a long narrow shield, gripped at the back by a hand hold. The fight continued with several showers of spears by each party until one participant failed to deflect and the spear pierced his shoulder. Apparently all parties agreed that the dispute was settled and we made haste to get out of the way before they disbanded.

The natives employed by the white, usually camped in low "Mia Mia's" built by themselves close to their employment; but a community native camp was situated for many years just clear of the township, at the western foot of a long hill behind the main portion of the town. Speaking of the "Mia Mia's" occupied by the natives, men and women, I have no hesitation recording that they were usually very clean and our parents were quite content to allow us to remain in or around the Mia Mia's for a greater part of the day. The peak population seems to be a subject of much speculation and I fear a lot of exaggeration

but judging from the fact that a number of houses were built during the latter part of 1800 (none had been demolished) and empty houses were practically unknown until 1895, I feel safe in asserting that Cossack was at its peak during the first half of the five years of 1890.

I have also heard it said that the three stone buildings now standing (customs quarters and bond store, courthouse, water police quarters and gaol) were amongst the first and oldest. I am sorry to disappoint but the buildings mentioned were the last to be built at Cossack, apart from one stone and two wooden structures built behind Nanny Goat Hill by Harry Edney, and later another by his son Jim Edney, near the old site of the blacks' camp at the foot of the long hill. The stone building was the school built 1896/7.

The customs, courthouse, etc., were built as far as I can place them in 1895, which date fits in with the opening of the new tram route made necessary by the fact that the bond store was being built on the original station site.

Galbraith's store (the walls of which still stand) was built 1890/1 and the first constructed of sandstone such as obtained along the sea front.

The Post Office was probably the first stone constructed building erected at Cossack. (Please note I have referred so far to stone constructed only). I was not born when the Post Office was erected and have never heard mention of its date. Possibly the Mercantile store building may rival it for date; but certainly not the only other two stone built buildings, namely the Union Bank and McRae's (residence) built opposite each other at the eastern extremity of the town and were erected prior to 1889 which is the earliest my memory goes back. During the period under review, there were 47 wood constructed houses at Cossack. (Iron was seldom used for walls and asbestos was unknown). I have included as houses, the two hotels (the "White Horse" and "Weld" built side by side), and also the two Chinese stores and Cingalese tailor shop. I would however, make it clear that I have not included any houses of the Asiatic town at the extreme eastern boundary.

Several tragic happenings occurred at Cossack, which naturally in such a close knit community created a deep impression, such as the sudden death of Mr. Truslove, the father of five children and later, another well known and respected resident, Mr. Shakespeare Hall (known to all and sundry as Shaky Hall) who was in the habit of taking a regular early morning dip in the creek opposite his residence, until the morning when he failed to return and was found dead, floating in the creek. Another case which affected our School, was the death of Laura Pearl, aged 10, daughter of Police Sergeant Pearl. Her death was caused by piercing her foot with a rusty nail in the school yard. Tetanus had no anti-dote at that period and was known as "lock-jaw".

Then again in the blow of 1894, the schooner "Ann" was dragged under at her anchorage where she sheltered from a willy willy. (Previously she had sheltered and weathered storms at Cossack). On this occasion she had sheltered at the "Flying Foam", and was joined by another skipper, we know as Joe, who was returning with a Malay whom he had rescued from an island farther out. The Malay was the only survivor when the "Ann" went down. He was on deck and climbed the rigging as she sank. Captain Erickson, his wife and child, Joe and some crew were below decks and lost their lives. Another tragic happening of which I have no personal knowledge, but my parents several times spoke of and pointed out premises as being similar to the enclosed verandah in which the victims were sleeping. The tragic happening was the murder of Bank Manager Anketel at Roebourne (and some say his assistant also) who were sleeping in separate portions of the bungalow shaped and partly enclosed verandah. The Manager's keys had been taken and may have been used; no money was missing and the murderer was never identified; and whilst many motives have been discussed, that of possession of signed documents appears to have been the most favoured.

Whilst recording the date of building construction, I omitted a fact about the old Post Office which few seem to be aware of.

The Post Office work was originally carried on in the eastern rooms of the upstairs floor and the western room was used

Mr. Birch as a chemist shop, the ground floor (or as we knew it, the cellar) was the custom house and bond store, and it was not until the new premises nearer the waterfront (as previously mentioned) were occupied, that my father was given the contract to convert the lower premises to the Post Office requirements and the business was carried on in the lower premises until finally closed after my departure from Cossack.

Another interesting point is that the yellow coloured bricks used in the cornice of the building were of overseas manufacture and probably arrived as "Profitable" ballast in some wool ship coming for back-loading of wool. The bricks bear an imprint of three letters - DK4 - and possibly anyone very interested in the date of the Post Office erection could trace the origin of the bricks.

The "North West Times" was published at Roebourne and my father was the Cossack agent. I did the delivery to subscribers at Cossack every Saturday morning after the arrival of the tram from Roebourne and also sold a few extras to casuals. The method of supplying householders with water supply requirements was probably unique. The main source of supply was one well at the western end of the town and north about 500 yards from Nanny Goat Hill. The older settlers had learned that in sinking their wells, it was necessary to stop, almost as soon as fresh water was struck. If further deepening was persisted in, their labour was wasted by the entry of salt water.

The water was raised by ships style hand pump and filled into wooden barrels of 50 or 60 gallons each.

The barrels had a spindle fixed into each end and were rolled along what became very soon, a welldefined track, attached to a horse by trace chains and collar. Three barrels could be rolled in this manner at each trip, by attaching two others behind the first, on short trace chains.

This well defined track led right through from the West end of the township to Chinatown at the East end, with intermediate tracks leading into the main township.

Practically every building had water tanks to take advantage of any rain that might possibly fall in the summer, it was most unusual to get any winter showers. All the labour was done by aborigine boys and therefore cost little and I can recall a time when competition was keen and the water was carted and emptied into the customers tanks for 1/- per barrel. At one period the district experienced an unusually long drought. At times it was found the well supply would fail before the days requirements were secured and on one occasion it was said that an old Chinese, finding he could not get supply through the pump, climbed down to the water; but could not get out again and was discovered by the first seeker of water in the morning. The days supply had to be wasted and after that, the well cover was carefully locked.

My first renewal of acquaintance with Cossack after leaving in 1900 was in the year 1938: I stayed at a combination of the two hotels which by then had been turned into one. I was astonished to find that there was no water available from the local wells and all supplies were being carted from Roebourne by motor transport.

On making enquiry of the couple of old hands still in the district it appears that a new, or younger element had spoilt all supplies by removal of hand pumps and replacing with power. Naturally the intake of water could not cope with power requirements and to remedy this the newcomers immediately deepened the wells, which at once produced results, but unfortunately the result was salt water.

The late Harry Edney's reply to my enquiry quickly and no doubt accurately summed up the position when he stated "The B ???? so and so's thought they knew everything and would not lower themselves to ask me, and I was not going to tell them". Harry still had water in his own private well and he and my father had worked the contract to dig the two public wells.

It may not be known by many that the first motor car to be driven in the township was owned and driven by a woman; Miss Ada Stewart, daughter of the licensee of the Weld hotel namely Mrs. W. T. Banger, who, after her first husband's death had continued to carry on the hotel and married Mr. Banger, a pearler. So far as I can recall the year that the car was used was the end of 1898 or early the following year. And oh! what a smell and smoke it left behind as it passed.

Twenty years ago, when I revisited Cossack after an absence of 38 years I drove to the foot of the hills in a direction North-west of Pt. Samson and during a morning's ramble I came upon three separate groups of wild goats. No group would be of lesser number than 50. I understand the goats became a pest to graziers. It was I believe from Cossack these goats originated. A certain party whom I will not name, kept a herd of milking goats at Cossack and supplied a number of residents with milk. A few years before the departure of our family from Cossack, the goat owner went South and tried to sell his goats before departure, not finding anyone willing to relieve him of the herd; he drove them into the hills and I understand in spite of organized raids, the herds are still in possession. For food supplies the Port was dependant on the infrequent arrival of boats from Singapore and Fremantle. Practically all our potatoes came from Singapore in large two handled baskets, covered at the top with close woven Chinese matting. No potato would be larger than an ordinary size pullet's egg and most would be smaller. The baskets were very useful to householders.

A small Chinese garden was situated behind the sandhills at the rear of the township, but this garden grew barely enough to keep the two hotels in supplies. For a part of the year a Chinese vegetable cart came from Roebourne one a week; but with every reasonable severe willy willy the garden was swept away by the Harding River and for a period we had no supply except for what we would collect on the flats at the junction of the Harding

River and Cossack creek, where such as tomatoes and melons grew prolifically for some time.

A lot of native goods were used such as :- cockles, oysters, periwinkles, naigoos, turkey, kangaroo, maryann (a salad), fruit of prickly pear (this grows the size of an egg and is used for pies, jam and raw, after the prickles had been removed by rubbing between paper).

The main supply of firewood was from the mangrove, where the natives cut it into four foot lengths and transported it to the beach where it was stacked in long rows four feet high and sold as required by the cord - 8' x 4' x 4'. The hotels and bakers were the principal buyers.

Whilst referring to food supplies I omitted mention of meat. A certain amount of goat meat was used, but in addition good supplies came from our local butcher. The butchering business was carried on by Ebinezer Martin and his son Bob. The beef was driven in from the stations by Bob and in our opinion no better or skilful at handling cattle than Bob could be found.

The slaughtering yards were situated at the back and close to the bottom of the long hill at the rear of the township, a large piggery was also run in conjunction with the yards. I am not very certain but I have a faint recollection the slaughter yards were originally carried on by people named Stock.

When Cossack began to fall back, about the middle 90's Martins ceased slaughtering but carried on with supplies from the Roebourne yards, which were situated behind a hill not far from the Harding River at the half-way boundary between Cossack and Roebourne.

Apart from bananas (sold by the bunch) and pomeloes, which came from Singapore, very little in the way of fruit reached Cossack. Very occasionally and far between, a small lot of grapes would arrive packed in sawdust and usually separated from the stems, dehydrated potatoes in large tins were available.

A small-pox scare occurred during the early 90's, no cases occurred at Cossack but one man who died from the disease on one of the Singapore boats was buried at Cossack, which risky job fell on to my father who was the local undertaker. I am not sure, but I have a faint recollection that the case came from the S.S. "Saladin".

The school teaching during my school days was carried out by females. I can, I think recall the names of all. The lady who taught us for the longest period was Miss Eva Hall, a niece of Mr. Shakespeare Hall, whose tragic death has been referred to. His daughter also taught for a short period, also Miss Hicks, Miss Sarah Pearl and also another lady Mrs.... (I omit the name purposely for reasons as you will see). It was the habit or custom for an inspector from South, to come to Cossack annually to examine the scholars and issue passes or otherwise.

During the period the lady (whose name I have omitted) was in charge of the school, the inspector arrived but found no teacher in attendance. However he went on with the examination and about two hours later the teacher arrived and in explanation stated she had gone to a dance at Roebourne the previous night with a male companion per horse and buggy, and on the return journey had fallen asleep, hence the delay. The inspector was not at all impressed, and the teacher went South very quickly.

Writing of dances at Roebourne brings to my mind an item that may interest my readers. In recent years the discovery of white Sturt Peas has been reported from a few places. I think the year would be 1897 that Hubert Hall and myself discovered a beautiful creamy white flower, having a pale red (or pink) eye, whilst riding after a cow (on horse) in the rocky gullies leading to the marsh at the end of the causeway on the right hand side. A dance was on soon after the occasion at Roebourne and I received from several ladies 1/- each for the blooms to be worn at the dance. Probably this could be the earliest recorded discovery of the rare white Sturt Pea (we knew the flowers only by the name of "Red Dragon".)

Police duties were carried out at the port by one land (or foot policeman) and usually two water police. As far as I can recall, Sergeant John Pearl was stationed here for the whole of the period under review - 1889 to 1900. He lived with his family in a long wooden building between the new courthouse and the road leading toward the cemetery.

The courthouse was one large room at the Western end of the same building and the lockup or jail, was at the back of the new courthouse.

The water police were stationed here as a rule and met every boat with their smart cutter.

The first water police to occupy the new stone quarters built near the Post Office was Geo. Brown and his family, and Geo Fry (single). A stone jail was also built at the rear but whether or not anyone ever occupied it I cannot say. Although approx. 80% of the buildings at Cossack were of wood construction, I can recall only two fires. The first occurred during the early hours of the morning following Guy Fawkes day celebration. The home was a small cottage on the Western slope of the long hill behind Cossack occupied by Harry Barlett, the wharf night watchman. We had spent £9. 0.0 on fireworks which Mr. Geo. Tee had manufactured and procured from various ships' stocks of rockets. The bonfire was composed of packing cases from the storekeepers. However we were exonerated by Mr. Barlett who recalled that he had left a primus burning.

The other fire was our own home and all that was saved was a cockatoo and the clothing, etc., of us, three elder boys. We were fortunate in being domiciled in a small one room cottage facing the back street at the rear of the main house.

As sport is a dominating phase of present day life it might be interesting for many to look back and study in what way people of the last generation enjoyed their leisure.

So far as Cossack was concerned I think I am safe in stating that the annual Regatta was the most popular.

The main event was the eight oar gig or open boat race, and much preparation of boats was carried out - such as special speed producing paints for the bottoms of the boats. Ships' boats and shore owned were all contestants. Then there were lugger races around certain islands and back, yacht (or cutter) races. Contestants were all solid boats and not anything resembling the shells of modern racers.

Swimming and diving for adults and by no means the least popular was the greasy pole from the Western corner of the wharf. Foot races were also held and contestants for most events joined in from Roebourne, to say nothing of practically the rest of Roebourne population as spectators.

The annual horse races at Roebourne were also popular and possibly the whole of Cossack population attended. It was not uncommon to have jockeys from the South riding and during the latter part of the century, some horses were sent up to compete. A tote was run and tickets were 10/- each as I knew to my sorrow when a sailor (Charlie Johnson) gave me a half sovereign to put on the tote and I lost.

Cricket and foot racing were popular. A practice pitch was situated behind the old school (blown away 1894) but all important matches were played on the Northern side of the tramway line as it took a turn to Roebourne. The pitch and field was the dry marsh land. Occasionally Japanese exhibitions of wrestling were put on by the few Japanese from Chinatown. A ring and tent would be set up in front of the Mercantile store for the event. Almost every Saturday of the winter, foot races for boys would be held along the roadway in front of the two hotels and Mercantile store and money prizes would be donated by the men who organised the events. Later when the two wheel bicycle came into use races were held for these.

Concerts and dances were organised, Mr. Geo. Tee being the leader as a rule. These events were held in the old school until the 1894 destruction and after that any organised would be in the dining hall of the White Horse Hotel as also would be the performances of any visiting troupes from the South who came very occasionally. Bicycles did not reach us until a little after the middle of the 1890's and soon became very popular with the youth and young men although so far as I can recall, adults did not use them up to the time we left (1900). My employer (Mr. Geo. Tee) was the first to have a gramophone (or as we knew it a talking machine) and I can assure you it caused much curiosity and entertainment.

Some may be curious to know at what date the concrete Jetty or more strictly speaking Wharf was constructed. I do not know exactly when it was commenced, or first used, but I can call to mind seeing some of the filling in; after the concrete containing walls were complete, and as we had not then moved to our new house being built on the main road near Nanny Goat Hill, but were still living in a house at the eastern end nearly opposite the Union Bank, the date I can thus place as 1889. The concrete walls are still standing though damaged in a few places and leaving dangerous hollows. The floor of the shed is still intact. It may be of interest to readers to know that the goods shed was removed and erected at Pt. Samson after Samson Jetty was rebuilt subsequent to being destroyed in the '98 blow. The Samson Jetty was again destroyed soon after the shed was erected there and had to be returned to Cossack when cargo lighters were again employed to handle cargo to and from the steamer which resumed the old method of anchoring outside Jarman Island. When Samson was built for the third time, the shed was again removed from Cossack.

During the mid 90's Cossack had a very busy time handling a rush of would-be gold seekers arriving on every North-bound steamer for some time. My parents opened a boarding house to accomodate the men as they came off the boats. Two empty houses were rented, not far distant from our home and whilst helping to wait on tables before and after school hours, I came to know quite a lot of fine chaps, whom I have never forgotten. The Boer War was still unfinished when we left Cossack in 1900; many good horsemen enlisted from outback and and passed through Cossack.

The town celebrated the relief of Mafeking by a big display of ships bunting and patriotic speeches in a large square between the Mercantile store and wharf fence.

Up to the time of our family leaving Cossack, electric power, telephones, or refrigeration had not arrived and all transport of heavy material was by horse power and heavy two wheeled vehicles called drays. It was said that for the construction of buildings on Lorman Island, Harry Edney transported stone and other materials across the channel to the Island by teams of horses and drays at low spring tide. I myself, witnessed his transport of all material used by my father in the construction of the explosives magazine which was carried out in the latter half or mid 90's.

Probably very few are aware that the magazine was built, in a large hollow beyond the first hill on the Eastern boundary of the cemetery. The materials were conveyed by several horses drawing one of the typical heavy drays up the hill slope at the top end of the cemetery and then proceeded through the gully or depression formed where two hills met at the northern extremity of the main hill. I quite believe even our modern tractors would have trouble in performing the same operation.

Very slight indication is now visible of a magazine ever having existed in the natural protected depression. The overturned trolley or truck used on a light rail track for transport to and from vessels is the only indication, other than two rows of spikes

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set into the natural stone leading down to the water's edge on the South eastern frontage where the small explosive boats loaded and unloaded.

The mention of these feats of transport reminds me that Harry Edney and his wife were amongst the final four old identities to leave Cossack. I understand they were sent South at the time of the last world war. All four died very soon after removal. Lighterage to and from vessels anchored outside Jarman Island was carried out mainly by flat bottomed wooden, double ended, lighters. The keel of one of these vessels, the "Amy", is still visible at low tide amongst the mangroves which have overgrown it in recent years. This vessel was wrecked, I understand, at the spot opposite our house long before 1890 and I have no personal knowledge of her previous use as a lighter.

Several other remains of vessels are visible near the "Amy"; one of these may be the lighter "Cossack" which was still in casual service late in the 1890's. Two or possibly three will be the remains of luggers owned by Muramat's and destroyed during the last war by the Army or Navy.

About 1895 or possibly a little later, the lighterage services were taken over by two steam powered, steel constructed lighters. The "Beagle" was the larger of the two and was run by the agency for the Blue Funnel line and another company which ran a combined service to and from Singapore and Fremantle. I was employed at their local representatives' office for the last three years I remained at Cossack. The Agency was owned and controlled by Mr. Geo. Alex Tee, (Mr. Tee also carried out all assay work

for Marble Bar and Whim Creek and any other producing ore). Mr. Tee later returned to England and Mr. Harding took over the agency business. Mr. H. Aubry Hall was agent for the Adelaide S.S. Company then ran the other lighter, and his office was situated next door to Mr. Tee's premises. The name of this lighter was the "Croydon".

Cyclones, or as we know them "Willy Willy's" were a problem to be reckoned with. All houses, including stone built or otherwise had their roofs anchored to the earth by heavy wire rigging as used by the larger vessels. No warning such as present day radar etc., was available to warn of an approaching blow and knowledge as to centre of fringe was apparently nil. If the weather during the summer months, September to April looked at all likely to develop into a "Willy Willy" preparation was made to meet the worst, sometimes it did not develop which was probably because we were on the outer cycle of fringe as we have named them over the past few years.

All houses had heavy shutters ready to drop down or close from side hinges and they were secured promptly at all warning signs.

Cossack and Roebourne usually appeared to be in the centre of any blow that we received; if we were not, it was not regarded as a true "Willy Willy". The only two blows I can recall from personal experience was 1894 and 1898. The blow of 1894 was the first experience after moving to our new house in 1890.

The house was situated facing the Main Road and was between Nanny Goat Hill and the tram line where it passed over the concrete culvert (which is still in good order). The house was built four feet above ground level on wooden piles, as a safeguard against flooding.

During the first half of the 194 blow the lighter "Cossack" came over the road, struck the corner verandah post and passed on the rear finishing up against the back road along with all other wreckage gathered up by the flood waters. A lull of 15 to 20 minutes then ensued, after which interval the wind came back from the opposite direction. In the meantime the water had risen above our floor boards and about six milking goats which had sought refuge underneath the house were drowned. My father had gathered up ropes with the idea to take us to safety but fortunately for all concerned, the lull came on at that juncture. During the lull it was observed that the pearl-
ing mother schooner "Harriet" was lying in front of the house (her keel had just failed to clear the road); she was leaning toward the house and of course all water had cleared, so soon as the lull came on, after the blow was over it was observed that the wind had lifted the vessel and she was leaning outwards. Another schooner was on dry land at the eastern side of the Jetty and several luggers were sunk or dismantled (one crew member was drowned at the anchorage) and others were driven across the marsh. This was the same blow that caused the sinking of the schooner "Ann" in the foam passage, with the tragic death of the Erickson family and others, and when our school house was also destroyed. The next serious blow

occured in 1898. At its warning we all shifted to the billiard room on the lee side of Brett's house near "Nanny Goat Hill" which was occupied at the time by Malachy Meagher and his young bride just recently up from the South. Their wedding presents were laid out on the billiard table and a grand piano stood in one corner, very shortly after the blow started the roof lifted off and we had to enter the main building via a rear door and that things were going badly with Mr. Meagher, as his front window was caving in, despite heavy shutters. The property was saved by quickly bolstering the windows with double bed and mattress. Another couple who had their roof lifted, tried to make their way to the new school near by and as soon as hit by the wind they were parted and hung on behind separate coastal spinifex (not the prickly kind). Neither party knew what had become of the other until the storm was over. Luggers were sunk and small vessels wrecked in the creek. The S.S. Beagle had broken from her moorings at the Jetty, swung round on to the rocks and finished up with her stern almost on the tram station platform with a hole in her forward, apparently resulting from contact with the corner of the Jetty as she broke away.

The S. S. "Croydon" had been tied up in the shelter of the "Deep Hole" Jetty; she broke away and finished up on dry land well above high water mark. All these vessels my father had the job of refloating. A lot of property was damaged or lost; our horse and cow were not seen again, probably drowned when driven by the wind into the back marsh. Both road bridges were destroyed, the tram line was out of action until ballast was replaced all the way across the marsh route. For a long

period my duty every Saturday morning was to ride per bicycle with the cash takings of the Cossack Branch of Watson and Tee and hand them to Mr. H.J. Watson, whose store was the building today used as a public hall and overflow school at Roebourne. The bank had ceased to operate at Cossack.

Cossack had a few what might be termed odd characters. One in particular comes to my mind; a big American Negro named Wilson, who had a son going to our school. This man worked as a lumper mostly, handling cargo and prior to the occurrences I am about to relate was a reputed bully when drunk (which was often).

When dynamiting fish he accidentally blew off one of his hands, which was replaced with a hook and he then carried on his lumpers job again. A little later he blew his only remaining hand off in a similar manner to the first, a second hook was supplied, and he again carried on his lumping.

Another story concerning this man and Syd. Hadley (previously mentioned) was that prior to the loss of his first hand, a fist fight took place between the two when they were said to have carried it on from the hotel to the slaughterhouse at the rear of long hill.

Both combatants were summoned to appear in the old courthouse. Syd. Hadley was the first to appear before the court and he appeared with his face covered by several plasters and assisted by a crutch. The magistrate remarked that he appeared to have been well punished and dismissed his case with a caution. Outside the Court the plasters were removed and crutch dispersed with. Wilson appeared unhurt and was fined a small sum and cautioned.

"Depuch" Island (as we know it but another island farther out is now known as "Depuch") is situated in an easterly direction from Cossack and at no great distance and is the island on to which the steamer "Edystone" ran and became a total wreck about mid 90's. She had just left the anchorage outside Jarman Island. I am wondering if this is the Island referred to recently by Professor when he reported discovery of ancient native carving. The professor described his discovery as Depuch Island, situated between Cossack and Port Hedland; possibly there is another island named "Depuch"?

I appear to have omitted mention of the new solidly built school facing the creek and situated on the back street behind our house facing the front street. This school was built in 1896 and 1897 to replace that blown down in 1894. The first teacher in charge of this school was Mr. Niebal, who for a time lived in a tent at the rear and usually dressed in shorts and light shirt and wore on his head a pith (or cork) helmet-like hat. This style of dress was most unusual in the district at the time. Soon after the opening I had to leave school as I was then 12 years old and had reached the sixth standard, which was the highest grade taught. Possibly some of my readers may consider this is a very poor standard of education, but I can assure anyone who gets this idea that we had far better grounding of knowledge of the three essentials - reading, writing and arithmetic than appears to be received by the modern child of 12. As proof of my statement I might be excused for further reference to myself. I did not at any time attend night school or have any further education other than that received at

Cossack. At the age of 20, I was a qualified accountant, in charge of a prominent business firm's books, and at the age of 24 was in charge of an office staff of 30, and a little later became secretary and in full control of all accounts of the same firm which had grown into a very big concern in the commercial life of Perth and country districts. I was with the same firm for 15 years and resigned to enlist in the 1914/18 war. As written earlier, after leaving Cossack I did not get an opportunity to return until the year 1938, on which occasion my wife and I stayed at the combination of "White Horse" and "Weld" hotels for about a fortnight. I was somewhat taken aback at the changes in the old town. One alteration I found that struck me forcibly, was that the Japanese practically occupied the township. Apart from Japs, the only other residents were the Hotel licensee and his wife and child with a cook as staff. Harry Edney and his wife were still living near "Nanny Goat" Hill and his son Jim and family were living in a house they had built just about where the natives' camp had been situated previously. Ernest Hall was the only occupant of the old house. John Ramsamy was living at the foot of "Lookout" hill, Laurie Bruce was domiciled in the old Post Office building. Newcomers, the Greek family of Tsakalos; namely mother, two grown up daughters, and three sons, were in the courthouse building. Japanese occupied the only building left in Jap town as it later became known.

Japs occupied Martin's house, the Mercantile store, Manager's residence and were also carrying on in what remained of the store building as a store; Japs occupied the custom house, with quarters and bond store.

Whilst we were staying at Cossack, five luggers came into the creek and per medium of

a very small dinghy unloaded a few bags of shell which went into the old bond store.

I was given to understand that the luggers were owned by Jiro Muramats, but he resided at Darwin.

This Muramats was identical with the boy who had gone to school for a short period at Cossack and was then sent by his father to the Eastern States so far as I can gather, and eventually to a University. His father died about the year 1897 but so far as I know the son had not returned to Cossack up to the time of our departure. I am recording details of this Japanese, as I believe the idea that Japanese were our original pearlers has arisen from this man's later activities.

I do not know the year of Muramats' return to Cossack or the commencing of his pearling activities, but more than likely it would be after World War One which came to a conclusion in 1918.

Whilst on the visit I mentioned I learned that a "Turtle Soup Factory" had been started at Cossack but was then closed down. The boiler house etc., attached to the rear of the customs bond store was erected by and for the soup manufacturing company.

I was given to understand that the factory ceased operations owing to the capital of £2,000 becoming exhausted by the Manager's trip to France to learn exactly what sort of soup the Parisians required.

I omitted to mention in my reference to Cossack residents in 1938, that there were no other houses left, other than those mentioned. All others had been demolished in the interval of 38 years, and taken to other districts.

I have always considered that Cossack is ideally situated and has an unbeatable climate for a winter resort, and judging by the number of southern visitors and also from our island districts and as tourist resorts are being much discussed in all our States at the present time, now is the time to give this place serious consideration. However, much would have to be done, and money spent on other than accommodation for visitors.

Two very important matters that would need money and attention before any visitors could use the old township, would be elimination of the present plague of sandflies and the clearing of the disgraceful broken bottle menace, on the land and on the sea floor and beach (what's left of the original). In reference to the first (Sandflies) I can without hesitation state that this menace did not exist up to the year 1900. In my opinion, the reason for this is that the mangroves have encroached and taken the place of the lovely clean beaches. It would be necessary to remove the mangroves from a point opposite Nanny Goat Hill at the Western end and to a point of rocks opposite the old Chinatown in the east. As mangrove wood is worth money for firewood the expense could no doubt, by careful management, be recouped from sales. In the old days, sandflies

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did not invade the township but mosquitoes were bad at times and were repelled by mosquito nets and some people burnt animal manure.

The other item: broken bottles, would need a lot of attention. I am quite sure from my own observations in 1938, that this menace did not exist and can only assume that it was set in motion by our troops stationed here. If this is so, I can only say it was no credit to the Officers in charge. I have been in many wartime camps and one rule that was strictly observed was NO litter and it was Orderly Room for any member if the rule was not observed.

It is now not safe to walk in the creek at low tide without a pair of boots on the feet. The sea bed is also badly littered with old machinery, oyster encrusted tram rails, some protruding six to eight feet about ground level and a constant danger to any visitors by boat. Such a visit was made whilst I have been here on this present stay; and the Officers in charge had to take special precautions as they had at low tide, observed the dangers.

The latter is particularly bad at and around the vicinity of the Jetty, indicating that small minds have experienced a lot of pleasure from observing the splash that lumps of machinery, etc., made on contact when thrown from the Jetty.

The disposal of rubbish and general observance of hygiene was treated with respect by the older generation and those controlling the township. All refuse, except nightsoil was disposed of at a special dump to the left and beyond Nanny Goat Hill. A specially built "half round" tip tank mounted between two cart wheels and drawn by a horse was used to collect "nightsoil" regularly and was disposed of at the marsh edge on the right after crossing the first bridge from Cossack, and on no account was burial allowed in the township as it appears to be at the port which took the place of Cossack.

In 1938, the only vessel which appeared to be using Cossack Jetty was the auxilliary lighter "Nichol Bay" in the charge of Harold Matheson. Alongside the Jetty however, was the sunken lighter "Silver Star" with water hardened cement (in barrels) still in her hold. It seems the vessel sprang a leak and sank before the cargo could be discharged.

The wreck now lying opposite the site of the old tram station is that of this vessel the "Silver Star".

Before concluding, there is another matter for mention.

Near the road at the rear of the old wharf is a gibbit-like framework made of old timbers from some of the houses removed.

Some visitors have informed me they have been told this was where men were hung in times past.

So far as I could learn, no hangings ever took place at Cossack and this structure I understand was erected long after my time to house a church bell. How about someone in authority pulling this misleading object down and ceasing destruction of the building, in which respect I have no hesitation in condemning those responsible for the disposal of the roof of the oldest land-mark (the Post Office) for a few petty a/s, and allowing its present mutilation. The condition of the sawn off timbers still showing, indicate it was in good sound condition when mutilated.

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